

## 2 years in to Mike Pence's epic gamble

As Pence ascends to power, his core beliefs morph along with his boss

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – It was just two years ago that Indiana Gov. Mike Pence entered the Trumpian twilight zone. Some



of those close to him saw it as a deal with the devil. Others believed it

would be his clearest path to the presidency that he had coveted since his Columbus, Indiana, childhood. What commenced in Indianapolis, Westfield, New York and then Cleveland in July 2016 has been Vice President Pence's odyssey, with the final chapters of how this ends unwritten, unknowable, and perhaps, unfathomable.

In the Pence worldview of ambition, he was climbing into the shoes of Harry Truman, Richard Nixon, Lyndon Johnson and George H.W. Bush, turning the "heartbeat



away" office as entry into the pantheon of 45. Or, he could be consigned to John Nance Garner's "warm bucket of piss" occupied by Hubert H. Humphrey, Walter Mondale and Al Gore, the vice presidents who aspired and fell under the weight of their bosses.

On July 24, 2016, in Cleveland, we heard Pence cut through the myriad of controversies sur-

rounding Donald J. Trump. He attempted to send a beacon of normalcy to the GOP delegates: "Donald Trump gets

**Continued on page 3**

## The mad king's tariffs

By **BRIAN A. HOWEY**

INDIANAPOLIS – In 1994, as a massive Republican election tidal wave was gathering, the motion picture "The Madness of King George" was released.

The plot line went like this: In the wake of the successful American Revolution, British King George III descended into acute intermittent porphyria. Or in layman's terms, the king went crazy. The early scenes of the film recount an obviously tormented and mentally ill king issuing absurd orders as his orderlies and staff tried to follow his deranged directives. The optics were a cross between a Chinese fire drill and a Ringling Brothers clown car. Any humor was ac-



**"The president believes that the next bilateral meeting with President Putin should take place after the Russia witch hunt is over, so we've agreed it will be after the first of the year."**

*- National Security Adviser John Bolton on Wednesday*



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accompanied with a winced expression. Alas, I conjure these images in the wake of President Trump's tariffs, which has ushered in a widespread trade war that is just now manifesting itself, with Trump insisting that winning a trade war is "easy." On Wednesday, Trump explained, "Every time I see a weak politician asking to stop Trade talks or the use of Tariffs to counter unfair Tariffs, I wonder, what can they be thinking? Are we just going to continue and let our farmers and country get ripped off?"

**To the president's** credit, he consistently advocated for tariffs and campaigned on them, capturing the votes of about 70% of Hoosier farmers. No one should be surprised.

But he is about the only one who thinks tariffs are a good idea. Not Gary Cohn, not Steve Mnuchin, not Rex Tillerson, not Jackie Walorski and 106 of her Republican House colleagues. The Indiana and U.S. Chambers oppose them, as do the Farm Bureau, the corn and soybean growers, the pork producers, Club for Growth President David McIntosh and the Wall Street Journal Editorial Board.

But here we are with soybean markets in China, which American farmers spent years developing, drying up as Brazil rushes in to take over. Soybean prices are tanking, while steel and aluminum prices are soaring, hammering Hoosier and American manufacturers. The danger isn't so much this season due to crop insurance and futures contracts. It's what happens if we enter into a long trade war sans a "yuuuuge deal."

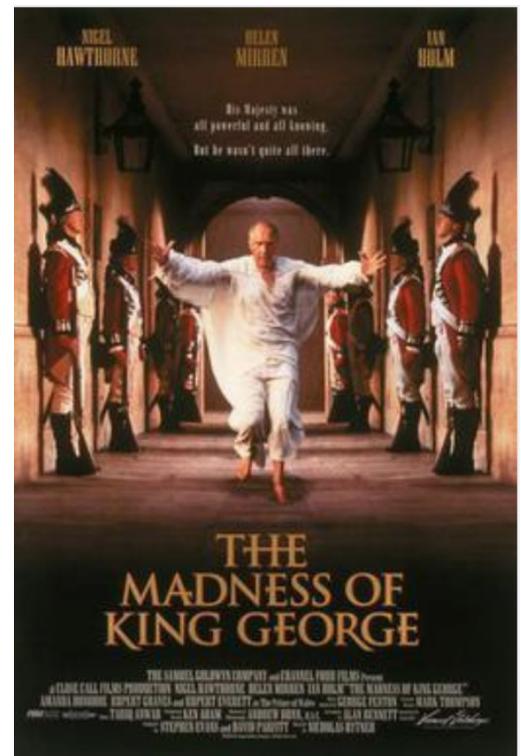
**So what's the** cabinet of Mad King Don and a supplicant Republican Congress to do hours after President Trump tweeted on Tuesday morning that "tariffs are the greatest!?" Why, announce \$12 billion in payouts to American farmers!

In an incredible press release, the U.S. Department of Agriculture said on Tuesday, "Of the total unjustified retaliatory tariffs imposed on the United States, a disproportion-

ate amount was targeted directly at American farmers. Trade damage from such retaliation has impacted a host of U.S. commodities, including field crops like soybeans and sorghum, livestock products like milk and pork, and many fruits, nuts, and other specialty crops."

Well, the "unjustified retaliatory tariffs" were instigated by President Trump.

Incredulously, the USDA continued, "High tariffs disrupt normal marketing patterns, affecting prices and raising costs by forcing commodities to find new markets." Yes! Gary Cohn was trying to make that



very case to the president last winter before he resigned in protest.

Ag Secretary Sonny Perdue explained, "This is a short-term solution to allow President Trump time to work on long-term trade deals to benefit agriculture and the entire U.S. economy. The President promised to have the back of every American farmer and rancher, and he knows the importance of keeping our rural economy strong."

Short term, as in Nov. 6.

**U.S. Sen. Ron Johnson**, Republican of Wisconsin, explained, "This is becoming more and more

like a Soviet-type of economy here: Commissars deciding who's going to be granted waivers, commissars in the administration figuring out how they're going to sprinkle around benefits. I'm very exasperated. This is serious."

**Soviet-type economy**, eh? Perhaps Trump spent part of those two hours last week in Helsinki picking Vlad Putin's Soviet-style brain on oligarch economics.

The WSJ opined Wednesday: "Hours after President Trump tweeted on Tuesday morning that 'tariffs are the greatest!' his Administration announced a \$12 billion aid package for American farmers to offset the harm from the Trump trade wars. If you're confused, join the White House. The Trump Administration is trying to fix an economic problem of its own making by putting the victims on the federal dole. Perhaps this is what White House trade adviser Peter Navarro meant when he said the trade harm was merely a 'rounding error.'"

Beyond Rep. Walorski's complaint that the "current exclusion process for steel and aluminum tariffs is broken," a reference to Trump's steel and aluminum tariffs that are hammering Hoosier manufacturers, the Indiana Republican delegation is on mute once again.

Republican Senate nominee Mike Braun did tell NBC News that the additional cooked up farm subsidies

"would be something I wouldn't be for."

As if the mad-cap Trump ag subsidies weren't enough for the news cycle, the Washington Post's lead headlines blared Wednesday: "Trump pushes 25% auto tariff as top advisers scramble to stop him."

They may have succeeded for a day. Trump did seem to back off some when meeting with the E.U. Jean-Claude Juncker Wednesday, who announced a soybean deal and future natural gas from the U.S. to Europe, with Trump holding off on auto tariffs. But as we know, Trump changes his mind frequently and on a whim.

**Operative phrase:** "As top advisers scramble to stop him." For the record, Hoosier auto execs at Toyota and Subaru, as well as General Motors, are sounding warnings about these auto tariffs, which would be poised to hammer yet another key economic sector here in Indiana.

So, the mad president wants his tariffs, his staff is scrambling much like the orderlies of King George III more than two centuries ago. So, too, will Republicans, following the Ministry of Funny Walks, all the way to the ballot box on Nov. 6. ❖

**Howey is HPI publisher.**

## Vice President Pence, from page 1

it," Pence said in his half-hour speech in primetime. "He's a doer in a game usually reserved for talkers. He doesn't tiptoe around a thousand new rules of political correctness. He's his own man, distinctly American, and where else would he find a following in the land of the free and home of the brave?"

"If you want a president who will establish law and order, give them resources, a president who can cut taxes and squeeze every nickel out of the bureaucracy, create strong borders who will enforce our laws, end the status quo in Washington and appoint justices of the Supreme Court who will uphold the constitution, we have that one choice. That man is ready, this party is ready. We will make America great again."

Ten days prior, Gov. Pence was a precarious incumbent, facing a tough reelection rematch against Democrat John Gregg. He had been bruised by the RFRA controversies, a mediocre executive who had inherited

legislative super-majorities he used to fashion a presidential aspirant resume. In April 2015, he seemed to be a political dead man walking. He was so dinged by RFRA that he didn't even enter the presidential derby. But the veepstakes? Therein was an opportunity.

In the Nov. 10, 2016, edition of Howey Politics Indiana, our analysis: When dozens of prominent Republicans

turned their backs on Trump, Pence did what Dan Quayle did in the summer of 1988. He conceived, then orchestrated a lifeline strategy to get on the ticket.

Trump had risen past 15 establishment Republicans to secure the nomination in Pence's Indiana. Trump watched in amusement as Pence's tepid "endorsement" of Sen. Ted Cruz in

the Indiana primary put him on the radar of campaign manager Paul Manafort and the Trump klan of Jared Kushner, Donald Jr., and Eric Trump. There was his early July audition in Westfield, a big Columbia Club fundraiser



with the nominee, a late dinner at the Capitol Grille, and a fortuitous grounded jet that kept Trump ensconced at the Conrad, where the likes of Newt Gingrich, Sean Hannity and Jeff Sessions could be seen wandering the lobby. There was a quickly scheduled breakfast at the Governor's Residence, followed by hours of uncertainty.

Word had leaked that Pence was the man, and he and Karen boarded a chartered flight arranged by Kushner for Teterboro where we watched them disembark. Then hours of uncertainty as Trump told Fox News in California he hadn't made a "final, final decision." Gov. Chris Christie was on the phone. As July 14 rolled into July 15, with Pence's signature needed to withdraw from his gubernatorial nomination by noon, with staff in stew, the governor was convinced that his future boss would keep his word. Finally, at 10:30 came the tweet of the century and ultimate anointment: "I am pleased to announce that I have chosen Governor Mike Pence as my Vice Presidential running mate. News conference tomorrow at 11:00 A.M."

It would be the Trump/Pence ticket, the political odd couple of our age. The sunny, middle class, devout but calculatingly ambitious governor with the profane, adulterous, pussy-grabbing Manhattan billionaire, who awoke on Election Day conjuring a new TV network and four years of opposition to President Hillary Clinton. Instead, with the shift of 80,000 votes in Michigan, Wisconsin and Pennsylvania, some say with the help of a myriad of Russian bots and stolen Podesta emails, they forged the upset of the Republic.

President Trump.

It probably wouldn't have happened without Mike Pence.

## The fall and rise of Donald Trump

It was a tormented campaign. Trump had insulted Muslims, Mexicans, the handicapped, reporters, Gold Star mothers, and the war hero Sen. John McCain. He had insinuated that Sen. Cruz's father was part of the JFK assassination conspiracy.

There was the "October surprise," or so we thought, when the Access Hollywood audio of Trump surfaced. Here was the 60-year-old Trump bragging about extra-marital conquests and "grabbing" female genitalia with this stunning line: "When you're a star they let you do it. You can do anything."

That Friday and Saturday, the Pences reportedly pondered either resigning the ticket, or an attempt to engineer Trump into the dustbin. Sunday night would be

V21, 41 HP 2016 HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA Thursday, July 14, 2016

### Gov. Pence poised for Trump's ticket

Indiana governor expected to be join billionaire for Manhattan ticket unveiling

By BRIAN A. HOWEY  
INDIANAPOLIS — Just two weeks ago, the notion of a possible vice presidential nomination was something Gov. Mike Pence's campaign denied was in the cards. But on Friday morning, the odd alliance of the populist and profane Donald Trump is expected to be joined by the evangelical Christian Indiana governor in Manhattan. Gov. Mike Pence was seen landing at Teterboro Airport in New Jersey late Thursday afternoon after leaving Mount Comfort Airport in Indiana.

Pence is prepared to turn his resignation from the ticket prior to the noon Friday deadline. The Indiana Republican Central Committee will have 30 days to choose a replacement.

It is the capstone of one of the most surreal and transformational weeks in Indiana politics since Gov. Frank

Obama died in September 2003, setting off a cascade of change in Hoosier politics that broke gender ceilings and paved the way for a governor named Mitch Daniels. Gov. Pence ascends to the national ticket, banking from the gubernatorial nomination he earned from voters last

Continued on page 4



66 93 QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I think it is appropriate that I make plain today that should there be a sudden need to name a new nominee for governor, I will not present myself as a candidate nor would I accept the nomination if offered."  
- Purdue President Mitch Daniels

V21, 42 HP 2016 HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA Thursday, July 21, 2016

### Pence cruises into Republican love

Indiana governor delivers a classic acceptance speech

By BRIAN A. HOWEY  
BRATTEVAH, Ohio — On a glittering summer morning by the shores of Lake Erie, the weary-eyed Indiana Republican National Convention delegation found themselves in the company of their vice presidential nominee.

It came just hours after Indiana Gov. Mike Pence cruised his way through the fratricidal carnage at the convention, delivering what U.S. Sen. Dan Coats called

a "grand slam home run" on the heels of U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz's epic "settle your consciences" speech that found him hounded by catcalls and boos as he exited the big stage.

Pence had endorsed Cruz just prior to the Indiana primary, but quickly shifted his allegiance to Donald Trump and his an-Lindy 500 driver stridency.

Gov. Mike Pence accepts his vice presidential nomination Wednesday night in Cleveland, moving the nomination to the national stage.

Continued on page 2



66 93 QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"I had to speak the truth. It's going to be an interesting couple of days. The chips will fall where they may."  
- U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz, after refusing to endorse Donald Trump during his RNC speech Wednesday night

one of the most surreal of American history. With the Pences watching the Trump/Clinton debate at the Governor's Residence, Melania Trump greeted former President Clinton wearing a Gucci fuchsia pussy-bow blouse. In the gallery were Clintonian sexual victims Paula Jones, Kathleen Willey, Juanita Broadrick and Kathy Shelton. Moderator Anderson Cooper asked Trump if he had sexually assaulted women, something Trump denied and Pence accepted.

In the Oct. 13, 2016, edition of HPI: This juxtaposition of topics associated with the pious, sunny Indiana governor is evidence that we're in the midst of an epic and bizarre campaign. It has morphed beyond Paddy Chayefsky's "Network" and George Miller's "Mad Max" into something we cannot yet understand because the final chaotic chapters have yet to be played out and written. The author of "Confessions of a Negative Campaigner" now finds himself trolleying with a presidential nominee on the precipice of a down-and-dirty end game that will scorch the earth and the reputations of those who dare give it an imprimatur. It comes with apparent ties between the Trump/Pence campaign and President Putin's Russian government, which has hacked its way into the upper hierarchy of the Clinton campaign.

Of course, the real "October surprise" was FBI Director James Comey's bombshell that Anthony Weiner's laptop (ya just couldn't make this stuff up) had recommenced the federal probe of Hillary Clinton. The reality was that the FBI was investigating the Trump's campaign ties with Russia, not Clinton. America was oblivious.

It was Pence who cut through all the moral dust storms. He spent the last weeks of the campaign beseeching Republicans to "come home." Many of them did. Some of his rhetoric had eyes rolling. In Iowa, a woman named Rhonda talked of taking to the streets to combat President Hillary. "Don't say that," Pence responded. "There's a revolution coming on November the 8th. I promise you."

Promises made, promises kept.

## Pence's shifting core values

Vice President Pence was to be President Trump's liaison to Congress, even though he never passed a bill of his own into law; never worked on significant legislation with a Democrat. He took over the transition that became a hotbed of lies and fueled the notion of Russian collusion.

Pence's congressional shortcomings became evident in August 2017 when he failed to line up enough Republican votes to repeal Obamacare, in part because there was no coherent "replace." After hours of intense lobbying by Pence, Sen. John McCain gave his "thumbs down," saying, "We should not be content to pass health-care legislation on a party-line basis, as Democrats did when they rammed Obamacare through Congress in 2009. If we do so, our success could be as short-lived as theirs when the political winds shift, as they regularly do. The issue is too important, and too many lives are at risk, for us to leave the American people guessing from one election to the next whether and how they will acquire health insurance. A bill of this impact requires a bipartisan approach."

When "Fox & Friends" co-host Ainsley Earhardt asked Pence if pre-existing conditions would be covered by the Graham-Cassidy legislation, Pence offered up this on legislation that didn't require states to follow through: "Thomas Jefferson said government that governs least governs best. I mean, the question people ought to ask is: Who do you think will be more responsive to the health-care needs in your community? Your governor and your state legislature or a congressman and a president in a far-off nation's capital? I mean, this is the concept of federalism upon which our Constitution was framed. But this legislation, Graham-Cassidy, as its authors have said, contains all the same protections for preexisting conditions as the president indicated."

### Pence morphs on trade

Reporter Tim Alberta, writing in the National Review in October 2016 observed of Pence: "What's notable isn't that a politician would profess confidence. It's that Pence, who describes himself as "a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican, in that order," attributes his confidence not to the providence of God, or to the power or principle, or to the fitness of his party, but to the transcendent appeal of his running mate, who he says "has tapped into the frustrations and aspirations of the American people like no one in my lifetime." This is not a façade. People close to Pence say that despite his initial distaste for Trump's style, he was awestruck by the candidate's galvanizing effect on voters in Indiana (he won the primary with 53%). And the more they talked, the more Pence subscribed to Trump's political analysis: Once an avowed free-trader, and supporter of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, he admits that Trump transformed his thinking by arguing that multi-national trade agreements are impractical and ripe for exploitation."

On Dec. 1, 2010, U.S. Rep. Pence addressed the Detroit Economic Club, saying, "To restore American

exceptionalism, we must end all this Keynesian spending and get back to the practice of free market economics. The freedom to succeed must include the freedom to fail. The free market is what made America's economy the greatest in the world, and we cannot falter in our willingness to defend it. The new Republican majority in Congress must embrace a bold agenda for economic growth built on timeless free market practices and reform."

Pence added, "For my part, I believe the answer is a spending limit amendment to the Constitution. Since World War II the federal government has operated on an



average of just under 20% of gross domestic product. But, in the past three years, federal spending has climbed to nearly 25% of GDP. Left unchecked, and accounting for no new programs, federal spending will reach 50% of GDP by 2055."

It was Pence who played a critical role in the passage of President Trump's tax overhaul last December. The result has been projected \$1.5 trillion deficits. Economist Steve Rattner, writing for Business Insider: "These deficits will increase the nation's total debt, which is now \$20 trillion, and increase it to as much as \$35 trillion. That means that the critically important ratio of debt to the size of the nation's economy will go from about 72% at present to as much as 109%. That would be by far the highest in our history, except for a short period of time after World War II. (Even in that period, debt to GDP only got as high as 103% and then declined quickly as we made the tough decisions that we are unwilling to make today.)"

Pence also supports the Trump tariffs on steel and aluminum, with the president threatening to hit European Union auto imports. The alarms are coursing across Indiana, from U.S. Rep. Jackie Walorski wary of the rising steel and aluminum prices for manufacturers in her district, to the collapse of soybean prices that will hit farmers.

In his 2010 Detroit speech, Pence said, "Encouraging free trade lowers barriers to entry for our goods,

and that in turn allows U.S. companies to create more jobs. Protectionism and closing our doors to other countries does not help us, or people in the rest of the world. We must support expanded free trade to renew American exceptionalism and create jobs."

Last weekend, the Washington Post reported that Pence's hometown of Columbus is now in the tariff crosshairs. "I'm very worried," said Tom Linebarger, the chief executive of Cummins, who tried to dissuade Trump of the tariffs in January. "We will do everything we can to mitigate . . . the impact to jobs. It's very clear, though, that we're not going to be able to mitigate everything. Our advice was not to do tariffs . . . but obviously it did not persuade. Their view of what's eventually good for our company differs to mine."

Club for Growth President David McIntosh, who Pence succeeded in the 6th CD in 2000, warned Americans that President Trump's tariffs are poised to wipe out gains from tax reforms and could bring about disastrous consequences. "I don't think we should put tariffs on Chinese goods. Those, by the way, are paid by Americans, not by the Chinese," McIntosh said. "If you enter into a trade war with them, the whole world economy will shrink. That's the problem for us. Tariffs bring counter-tariffs and you get into a trade war. We saw it before the Great Depression, we have seen it other times where it just leads to everybody being worse off. It will end up being a disaster."

Politico wrote in March that Pence was the "last hope" to avoid the Trump tariffs and trade war. "The vice president fully supports the president's policy agenda and the VP's role as an honest broker should not be misconstrued as lobbying one way or another," Pence's office told Politico. As aides scrambled this week at the White House, Trump seemed to back down on E.U. auto tariffs Wednesday. Perhaps Pence's behind-the-scenes voice held sway.

It wasn't just trade. In his CBS "60 Minutes" interview right after the 2016 election, Pence was questioned about Trump's proposed Muslim ban, which he had characterized when Indiana's governor as "offensive" and "unconstitutional." Pence quickly signaled his willingness to shift on the issues. Asked if he agreed with Trump's call, Pence responded: "I do."

**Cheerleader in chief**

Pence is doing what vice presidents should do, which is support his president, and this is a president who demands loyalty. Pence has been so obsequious in his

Y22.N9 HP 2016 HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA Thursday, Oct. 13, 2016

### Pence straddles the GOP cataclysm

As Trump declares war on GOP, Pence fights through loyalty, Russian hacks & scorched earth

By BRIAN A. HOWEY  
INDIANAPOLIS — Hours after Mike Pence recited at Donald Trump's lewd remarks in a 2005 "Access Hollywood" video tape with Billy Bush — learning about them at a Toledo restaurant where he was to have a photo op with an autographed hot-dog bun signed by his running mate — the Indiana governor morphed from one who couldn't "condone or defend" the verbiage, to finding a big man of redemption.

"I am truly honored to campaign with him," Pence said Monday morning in an MSNBC "I thought his apology on Friday night was appropriate." It was offset by his comments and urged him to show his heart to the American people and he did that Sunday night. Donald Trump made it clear that those were only words. He hadn't engaged in any of that behavior and I believe him. I am proud to stand with him." A few

Gov. Mike Pence grants Buckeye voters at Tony Packo's in Toledo when he prepared for a photo op with a Trump autographed hotdog bun when the heat audiotape story broke.

hours later in North Carolina, Pence said Trump "literally embodies the spirit of America. It takes a big man to know when he's wrong. And to admit it. And (to have) the fur-

Continued on page 3

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**Souder: Who are we?**

By MARK SOUDER  
FORT WAYNE — It was around 2 a.m. on a cold January night in Washington. Looking down at the White House from our room at the Hay-Adams hotel, the lights were dim outside but it had a glow coming from the lights within. I was about to go live, worldwide, on BBC's morning news show.

The evening before, President William Jefferson Clinton had delivered his annual State of the Union address to Congress. "These are good times for America!" he had told us. His message, however, had been overshadowed by the press conference the day before in which he famously said: "I

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"It is not acceptable to ask a moral, dignified man to cast his vote to help elect an immoral man who is absent decency or dignity. If the consequences of standing against Trump is indeed the election of Hillary Clinton, so be it."

- Conservative host Glenn Beck

Y22.N14 HP 2016 HOWEY POLITICS INDIANA Thursday, Nov. 10, 2016

### Holcomb rides Trump/Pence surge

An improbable journey to win the governor's office

By BRIAN A. HOWEY  
INDIANAPOLIS — If you take the October 19th/Howe Politics Indiana Poll and the Nov. 3-2 final survey and draw a trend line, what you end up with in the Indiana gubernatorial race is a 51-45 upset victory by Eric Holcomb over Democrat John Gregg.

In our September survey, Gregg had a 40-35% lead over Holcomb. In the October survey, it was tied at 42%, with the Trump/Pence momentum beginning to build. The presidential ticket went from 43-38% in October to a 48-37% lead over Hillary Clinton in early November.

It was a precursor to a tidal wave, an inverse tsunami, that was ignited by the Oct. 28 letter from FBI Director James Comey, tearing off Clinton's email fiasco.

Continued on page 4

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**Pence's Trump cigar**

By BRIAN A. HOWEY  
MISHVILLE, Ind. — "Do you want to see something really cool?"

I was with Liz Murphy, an aide to Vice President Dan Quayle and we were in his ornate office at the Old Executive Office Building next to the White House.

We walked into an office similar in size and scope to the Indiana governor's office at the Statehouse. We ended up before an antique colonial revival-style double-paned desk.

Theodore Roosevelt brought to the White House in 1903. It was one of six desks to once occupy the Oval Office. Murphy pulled open the desk drawer, which

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"Donald Trump is going to be our president. I hope that he will be a successful president for all Americans. We owe him an open mind and a chance to lead."

- Democratic presidential nominee Hillary Clinton in her concession speech

support of Trump that terms such as "bootlicker" and "sycophant" dot the lexicon.

In the final cabinet meeting of 2017, Pence praised Trump every 12 seconds: "Congratulations and thank you. Thank you for seeing through the course of this year an agenda that truly is restoring this country. You've restored American credibility on the world stage. We're standing with our allies, we're standing up to our enemies. You signed more bills rolling back federal red tape than any president in American history. You've unleashed American energy. You've spurred an optimism in this country that's setting records. I'm deeply humbled as your vice president to be able to be here. Because of your leadership and because of the strong support of the leadership of the Congress, you're delivering on that middle-class miracle. I want to thank you Mr. President. I want to thank you for speaking on behalf of and fighting every day for the forgotten men and women of America."

That part of "standing with our allies" has required Pence to work subtly, assuaging the fears of allies after Trump's tirades at G-7 and NATO summits. When it came to Trump's one-on-one meeting with Russian President Putin on July 16,

which was widely panned across the political spectrum, Pence tweeted, "Our @POTUS is now on his way home from a historic trip to Europe. And the truth is, over the last week, the world saw once again that President Trump stands without apology as the leader of the free world."

In a speech, Pence saluted Trump for his "deeply productive" dialogue and his use of "diplomacy and engagement," adding, "Disagreements between our countries were discussed at length, but what the world saw, what the American people saw, is that President Donald Trump will always put the prosperity and security of America first."

This came as Trump seemed to side with Putin on questions of Russian assaults on the U.S. elections and the energy grid, with National Intelligence Director Dan Coats twice putting out statements that contradicted Trump's assessments.

Pence's loyalty to Trump has brought harsh criticism from conservative punditry. After Pence traveled to Arizona last winter and praised recently pardoned sheriff Joe Arpaio, Washington Post columnist George Will wrote:

"Donald Trump, with his feral cunning, knew. The oleaginous Mike Pence, with his talent for toadyism and appetite for obsequiousness, could, Trump knew, become America's most repulsive public figure. Pence, oozing unctuousness from every pore, called Arpaio 'another favorite,' professed himself 'honored' by Arpaio's presence, and praised him as 'a tireless champion of ... the rule of law.' Arpaio, a grandstanding, camera-chasing bully and darling of the thugish right, is also a criminal, convicted of contempt of court for ignoring a federal judge's order to desist from certain illegal law enforcement practices. Pence's performance occurred eight miles from the home of Sen. John McCain, who could teach Pence — or perhaps not — something about honor."



## History awaits

Many conservatives view Pence as taking the ultimate political gamble by aligning with Trump. The men who plucked Pence from potential Hoosier oblivion — Paul Manafort, Jared Kushner, the Trump sibling brothers — face trial and investigation.

President Trump's Helsinki performance with President Putin put him in obvious contradiction with a top Pence ally, National Intelligence Director Dan Coats.

Trump was so submissive toward Putin that a

wide range of analysis and punditry invoked the word and concept of "treason."

Pence's gambit is the classic straight razor. Trump's demise could make him the 46th president. A tangled ankle in this web could bring Pence historic ignominy.

Erick Erickson, founder of RedState, cited Pence's support for Trump, "a shallow demagogue," which he believed served to "destroy all that Mike Pence so tirelessly for so many years worked to achieve."

In the July 21, 2016, HPI, I channeled Rod Serling of the Twilight Zone. "Is Donald Trump the incarnation of Reagan?" Serling might begin. "This is a portrait of an exposed governor named Mike Pence, who feeds off his self-delusion, who finds himself perpetually hungry for greatness in his diet. He searches for something which explains his hunger and why the world passes him by without saluting. It is something he looks for and finds at a national convention, in his twisted and distorted lexicon he calls it faith, strength and truth. But in just a moment Mike Pence will ply his trade on another kind of corner, at the strange intersection we call the Twilight Zone." ❖

## Roe v. Wade

Pence's decision to court and take the slot on Donald Trump's ticket may have come down to one crucial point: The opportunity to influence the nomination of pro-life U.S. Supreme Court justices. On this front, with the confirmation of Justice Neil Gorsuch in 2017 and the nomination of Judge Brett Kavanaugh this summer puts Pence within reach of that goal.

In March of 2016, Gov. Mike Pence signed House Enrolled Act 1337, a law that banned women from having abortions based on the gender, race or disability of the fetus. "Some of my most precious moments as governor have been with families of children with disabilities, especially those raising children with Down syndrome," Pence said at the signing. The 7th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled the law unconstitutional in April, with Judge William Bauer writing that it "clearly violates" what he described as "well-established Supreme Court precedent."

Now, with the likely confirmation of Kavanaugh this autumn, this law and injunction could be the basis for a challenge to Roe v. Wade. Thus, this case could bring Vice President Pence full circle on the crusade of his career. He played a key role in President Trump's selection of Kavanaugh for SCOTUS and he has vowed to consign Roe v. Wade "to the ash heap of history." It makes perfect sense in Pence world to have a law he signed become the test case he hopes will puncture the 1973 landmark ruling on abortion.



**CONTENT BY CARTER**  
strategic content creation and deployment

# Coats is Trump's straight talker

By JACK COLWELL

SOUTH BEND – I've always liked Dan Coats. And now I've been reminded why.

Indiana voters liked Coats enough to send him to the Senate in three elections, but he never had widespread approval. Many Democrats bashed him as a right-winger. Many Republican right-wingers criticized him as too much of a nice guy for effective eye-gouging politics. Some just brushed off Coats as "that other Dan," successful only as a protégé of Dan Quayle, taking offices "inherited" as Quayle moved up the political ladder.



Coats always had a very conservative voting record, but he often sought to reach across the aisle for compromise. He once told me in his final Senate term, as he was deciding not to run again, that he was disgusted with the vicious divisiveness preventing compromise for a united approach to problems from the deficit at home to the "wildfires all over the world," security threats abroad that he saw as a member of the Senate Intelligence Committee.

Coats talked straight. Still does.

Unfortunately, President Trump, in his weak and mysterious performance in kowtowing to Vladimir Putin, brushed off straight talk from Coats, his own director of national intelligence. He suggested that Putin was more credible than Coats on whether Russia sought to interfere in our 2016 election.

"My people came to me, Dan Coats came to me and some others, they said they think it's Russia," Trump told the world. "I have President Putin; he just said it's not Russia. I will say this: I don't see any reason why it would be."

**President Trump** belatedly, half-heartedly and unbelievably added an out-of-context "not" in his statement the next day. However, what he said in real time at the Helsinki news conference was that Putin "was extremely strong and powerful in his denial today." Would a former KGB officer lie?

Coats, likely fearing that Trump would wilt before Putin, sent a warning in a speech three days before the

summit that should have bolstered Trump's resolve. "The warning lights are blinking red again," Coats said, sounding the alarm about a cyberattack that could be likened to the Sept. 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Coats pinpointed Russia as the "most aggressive foreign actor, no question. And they continue their efforts to undermine our democracy."

Trump drove right through the blinking red lights to agree with Putin in their remarkable news conference that there was no Russian interference and no need to investigate what was done or might happen again.

**Coats talked straight again.** In a statement immediately after the pathetic performance by his boss, Coats stressed anew that the entire intelligence community agreed that Russia did indeed meddle in the U.S. presidential election.

"The role of the intelligence community is to provide the best information and fact-based assessments possible for the president and policymakers," Coats said. "We have been clear in our assessments of Russian meddling in the 2016 election and their ongoing pervasive efforts to undermine our democracy, and we will continue to provide unvarnished and objective intelligence in support of our national security."

Reaction was mixed. One reaction among some who agreed with what Coats said was that he should resign. They said he would have no honor, no integrity if he stayed on in the administration after Trump threw him and the country under a Russian bus.

But another former senator from Indiana, Dick Lugar, had it right when he said Coats should "just keep his head down and do his duty," using his experience to provide leadership for an intelligence community still trying to keep America safe. "I think it's



important to the country that he stay where he is," Lugar said.

I've always liked Dan Coats. More so now than ever. And I like him right where he is. He should neither quit nor be fired. ❖

**Colwell has covered Indiana politics over five decades for the South Bend Tribune.**

# Poll trendlines begin to form; CD generic 51-39% Democrat

By BRIAN A. HOWEY

INDIANAPOLIS – We are heading into that stretch of the election cycle where distinct trendlines begin to take shape. It was August 1994, 2006 and 2010 when the contours of those wave elections became more recognizable. While voter intensity in polls has been more meaningful up to this point, the congressional generics begin to carry more heft in August and September.



The anomaly was the historic 2016 election when many pollsters, pundits and, yes, even Republican nominee Donald

Trump himself, were convinced that Hillary Clinton would be the next president. That all changed around 9 p.m. on Nov. 8 when the epic Trump epic came into focus.

This cycle, President Trump absolutely dominates all things politics. This election will essentially be a referendum on his first two years. As we've stated before, he sucks the oxygen away from every candidate. Every nominee must compete for air time, and each is viewed through the Trump prism, opining, reacting, and in the case of Republicans, hoping to carry his base while not alienating the independent bloc needed to win elections.

As we head into August, things remain muddled, which suggests that 2018 could be as unpredictable as 2016. Last week should have been, by most accounts, a disastrous one for Trump. He was utterly disruptive at the G-7 meeting earlier this spring, and followed suit at the NATO summit, his meeting with embattled British PM Theresa May, and then his Helsinki summit with Russian President Putin.

Three key polls offer differing views of the Trumpscape. The first was the NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll, most of which was conducted before Helsinki, but included reaction to Trump's tornadic sweep where he tormented NATO allies and called the European Union a "foe." Trump's approval stood at 45%. That included 88% approval from Republicans. The bad news for the president is that his standing — plus the GOP's — is now worse with independents than it was a month ago. Just 36% of

independents approve of Trump's job (down 7 points from June). And independents prefer a Democratic-controlled Congress by more than 20 points, 48-26%. In June, the Dem lead among indies was just 7 points, 39-32%.

"Welcome to the latest and most daring of Donald Trump's high-wire acts, in which the president increases his degree of difficulty and manages yet again to stay on his feet," said Fred Yang, a Democratic pollster who helped conduct the survey with Republican Bill McInturff. "The more Trump gets criticized by the media, the more his base seems to rally behind him."

"During what is a terrible week in terms of media coverage and focus on the president, these numbers don't budge," McInturff said, describing the president's approval ratings as "stable."

One other aspect of the NBC/Wall Street Journal Poll jumped out at us: As Judge Brett Kavanaugh heads into his confirmation, 71% support Roe v. Wade, which is an all-time high. That includes 88% of Democrats, 76% of independents and 52% of Republicans, the first time that's been over 50%.

A Rasmussen Reports poll puts Trump's approval at 46/52% on Wednesday, while the Economist/YouGov Poll puts it at 43/54%. Gallup daily tracking puts Trump approval at 42% with 54% disapproving.

New York Times columnist Frank Bruni, however, questioned the "Republican loyalty" data, suggesting that "poll after poll is skewed by an exodus of former Republicans whom he scared off.

They may not be showing up as party members in surveys, and Trump's high marks could be coming from a winnowed, favorable sample." While Trump's Indiana base appears to be strong, anecdotally HPI has heard from numerous Republicans who have fled the party, not identifying as "Republican" in surveys. Brendan Nyhan examined this possibility in The Times' Upshot section last year, describing data that suggested that "people who identify as Republican may stop doing so if they disapprove of Trump, creating a false stability in his partisan approval numbers." If those



people were factored back in, according to this analysis, Trump's partisan approval rating could dip to 70%.

Quinnipiac University conducted a poll after the Trump/Putin presser in Helsinki and the various 180- and 360 degree walk-backs by the White House. Released Wednesday, it showed Trump's approval rating tumbling to 38%, with 58% disapproving; that compared to a 43/52% rating on June 20 following Trump's June 12 summit with

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un. The president's only clear support among listed groups is from Republicans, who approve 82-15%, and white evangelical Christians, who approve 71-26%.

But the real eyebrow lifter was the congressional generic released by Quinnipiac on Wednesday, showing Democrats with a 51-39% lead. The next week or so will determine if that's an outlier, or the beginning of a trend. Women voters are backing Democratic candidates 57-32%. Men are divided with 46 percent going Republican and 44% for Democrats. White voters are divided with 46% for Democrats and 45% for Republicans. Black voters go Democratic 78-16% and Hispanic voters back Democrats 66-23%. The key block of independent voters backs Democratic candidates 50-33%.

It's interesting that in the Quinnipiac poll, the partisan makeup was 25% Republican, 31% Democrat and 38% independent. "Whether it is with love or not, President Donald Trump's relationship with Russia has delivered a small blow to his already poor standing with the American people," said Peter Brown, assistant director of the Quinnipiac University Poll.

As for Russian collusion, Quinnipiac showed by a 48-39% margin they don't believe Trump colluded with the Russians, but by a 46-44% margin, they believe his campaign did. And by a 55-31% margin, respondents believe that Special Counsel Robert Mueller is conducting a fair investigation into possible collusion. This investigation is "legitimate," 54% of voters say, while 40% say it is a "witch hunt."

The third poll in this pre-August grouping was ABC/Washington Post, which also was conducted after the Trump/Putin summit. The public by a 17-point margin says America's leadership in the world has gotten weaker, not stronger, under Trump. And just 33% approve of his handling of his summit with Vladimir Putin last week, with 40% saying he went too far in supporting the Russian leader. As for the summit, 56% disapprove of Trump in a post-summit news conference with Putin, expressing doubt about U.S. intelligence conclusions that Russia tried to influence the U.S. election; just 29% approve. Just 51% of Republicans and 44% of conservatives approve of Trump questioning U.S. intelligence on the matter, tepid levels of support in his base. In the political center, 59% of independents disapprove, as do 68% of moderates.

On the congressional generic ballot question, Economist/YouGov has Democrats up 44/38% on Wednesday while Rasmussen Reports puts it at 47/40% in favor of Democrats. NBC/Marist polling today shows Trump's approval 36% in Michigan and Wisconsin, and 38% in Minnesota.

So, let's call this grouping of polls the final snapshots before the real contours begin to harden into distinct trendlines heading into the fall. Unless, of course, President Trump becomes so unpredictable that 2018 becomes the twin of 2016. It's too early to tell whether that will be the case.

## U.S. Senate

### Braun's Trump/Hill dilemma

While a defense fund has been set up for Attorney General Curtis Hill, citing his "lynching" over sexual harassment allegations, the Republican establishment is still seeking his resignation. Senate nominee Mike Braun told Fox59's Dan Spehler: "From everything I've seen, and we did have to clarify it, for Curtis' sake and the state's, maybe he ought to step down, and he should." When Braun was asked if he believed the four women making the allegations, he said that he did. Again, this is a slippery slope for Braun, who hopes to have President Trump come in and campaign for him this fall. Trump faces sexual harassment and groping allegations from close to a dozen women, reinforced by his 2005 "Access Hollywood" audio that nearly sank his presidential campaign. If the two appear on stage together, expect a double standard assessment.

### Braun against farm subsidies

Just hours after President Donald Trump tweeted that tariffs are "great," Republicans on Capitol Hill were lashing out against the administration's new plan to help farmers hurt by the ongoing trade wars that have shut them out of international markets (NBC News). The U.S. Department of Agriculture announced that it would provide \$12 billion for farmers hurt by Trump's tariffs. Braun said in an interview with NBC News that additional subsidies "would be something I wouldn't be for." The announcement comes just three months before the midterm elections as Republican candidates in red, rural states and districts have had to navigate a trade policy that has farmers growing more concerned by the day.

### Braun will seek ag committee

Republican Senate candidate Mike Braun addressed farmers and agribusiness leaders attending the Indiana Ag Policy Summit Monday in Indianapolis (Pfeiffer, [Hoosier Ag Today](#)). Braun touted his business experience and, in particular, his ties to farming since the late '70s. He says he currently manages a lot of farm acres and deals with a lot of farmers on a regular basis. "I feel real good about understanding the issues, having a deep context of experience, and have said I'd love to be on the ag committee. That's one area where I think I could walk on and probably do as good a job, if not better, than Joe Donnelly because I'm going to understand it from the context of a deep experience." Braun said that one of his top farm policy priorities, if he were to get elected, would be maintaining crop insurance in the farm bill. He said he feels as though coverage levels are sufficient and the program is good because it pays for itself.

### Braun reportedly using finance ploy

Republican U.S. Senate candidate Mike Braun con-

tinues to pump money into his campaign, and appears to be engaging in the controversial but legal practice of using donations meant for retiring debt from his primary race to boost his general election campaign (Erdody, [IBJ](#)). Braun, who is challenging Democratic incumbent Joe Donnelly in November, loaned his campaign millions of dollars during the primary season, saying he wouldn't be beholden to special interest groups in Washington, D.C. Since the May 8 primary, Braun has indicated that he has shifted from that strategy and has been attending out-of-state political fundraisers. In a press release sent earlier this month, Braun touted raising \$2.5 million in the second quarter, including \$1.5 million since the primary "without personal contributions or loans." The second quarter began April 1, but the primary took place on May 8. Braun indeed raised nearly \$1.5 million since the primary, but in addition to that, he loaned the campaign about \$350,000. From April 19 to June 30—the dates of the latest campaign finance report—he has loaned the campaign nearly \$1 million.

**Donnelly out-raised Braun with donors**

Braun has not raised as much money from campaign supporters as he recently implied, taking in less money than Democratic Sen. Donnelly during the last three months when personal loans are subtracted from his total (Groppe, [IndyStar](#)). Contributors gave Braun about

\$1.5 million during April, May and June, and Donnelly about \$1.9 million. Braun announced mid-July a "blockbuster fundraising haul" for the 2nd quarter of the year, posting \$2.5 million raised with over \$1 million cash on hand at quarter close, including nearly \$1.5 million raised since the day after the primary, without personal contributions or loans." But the disclosure report Braun has since filed with the Senate shows nearly \$1 million of his \$2.5 million was in personal loans. Of that, about \$350,000 was loaned after the primary. Braun's campaign spokesman said the earlier claim of not relying on personal funds referred only to the \$1.5 million his campaign said he'd raised since the primary. Spokesman Josh Kelley declined to say if Braun will contribute additional personal funds to the campaign.

**National Right to Life endorses Braun**

Braun was endorsed by the National Right to Life. "Indiana voters who are concerned with the right to life and with the protection of the most vulnerable among us should vote for Mike Braun in November," said National Right to Life President Carol Tobias. "Indiana's unborn children deserve a senator like Mike Braun, who will vote to protect their lives, rather than Joe Donnelly, who votes to protect the financial interests of the abortion industry." Braun said, "Defending the sanctity of life is a solemn responsibility, and I'm honored to be endorsed by National

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## Donnelly releases 5th TV ad

Donnelly’s campaign released its fifth TV ad, “Fighting Chance,” highlighting President Trump and the McLinn family from Indianapolis praising Joe for his tireless bipartisan work to enact his ‘Right to Try’ legislation. The ad is part of a six-figure ad buy of 30- and 60-second spots. Sitting at the kitchen counter at her home in Indianapolis, Laura McLinn describes how Joe tirelessly worked with her family to introduce and pass ‘Right to Try’ legislation. After passing out of the Senate in August 2017, the bill was signed into law in May at a signing ceremony where President Trump publicly praised Donnelly for his efforts. The ad, which includes footage from the ceremony in both the 30- and 60-second editions, is the first political ad of the cycle from a federal Democratic candidate that showcases praise from President Trump. Named after Laura’s 9-year-old son, Jordan McLinn, who has Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, a disease with no known cure, the law will give terminally ill Americans the right to try potentially life-saving medical treatments. “When we first met Senator Donnelly and told him about ‘Right to Try,’ he told us ‘whatever you need, let me know... I want to help you guys.’ He was incredible,” Laura McLinn says in the ad. “Senator Donnelly made all the difference in getting this bill passed. He stuck with it until we got it done.” Braun’s campaign reacted, saying, “When it comes to working with President Trump, Sen. Donnelly voted against tax reform, supports ObamaCare and Barack Obama’s Iran nuclear deal, and now he’s waiting for Democrat permission to support Supreme Court nominee Brett Kavanaugh,” said spokesman Josh Kelley. “Hoosiers know Democrat Sen. Donnelly does not stand with them, he stands with his liberal leadership and their unprecedented effort to block President Trump’s agenda.” **Horse Race Status:** Tossup

## Congress

### Sabato moves 2nd, 9th CDs to ‘likely’ R

Democrats are now a little better than 50-50 to win the House. This is the first time this cycle we’ve gone beyond 50-50 odds on a House turnover (Sabato’s Crystal Ball). We’re making 17 House ratings changes this week, all in favor of the Democrats. U.S. Reps. Jackie Walorski and Trey Hollingsworth moved from “Safe Republican” to “Likely Republican.” Those ratings mirror that of the Howey Politics Indiana Horse Race.

### 2nd CD: Hall won’t support Pelosi

Second CD Democrat Mel Hall announced today he will not support House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi for leadership in 2019. “I do not currently support and will not support Nancy Pelosi for leadership in the next Congress. Washington is broken – and career politicians in both parties are to blame,” Hall said. “People are working hard in

the 2nd District, but Congress isn’t working for them. And, in my experience on the farm, as a minister, and in business, when something isn’t working you fix it.”

### Walorski agrees to debate Hall

With less than four months until the Nov. 6 election, Democrat Mel Hall has challenged 2nd District Republican incumbent Rep. Jackie Walorski to a series of three televised debates (Parrott, South Bend Tribune). Walorski’s campaign issued a statement Thursday saying she had agreed to the debates. “I have always believed debates are a vital part of the democratic process, and I welcome the opportunity to discuss the issues that matter most to Hoosier families,” Walorski said in a statement. Democrats in prior elections have been unable to get Walorski to debate on television.

### Walorski says tariff exclusion ‘broken’

Walorski at a Ways and Means Trade Subcommittee hearing renewed calls for the Commerce Department to fix the broken exclusion process for steel and aluminum tariffs, a news release stated. “The current exclusion process is broken – it’s opaque, unfair, and breathtakingly inconsistent,” Congresswoman Walorski said. “We’re not asking Commerce to grant every request. We’re saying there are major structural issues that are causing uneven outcomes. We’re saying that the deck seems to be stacked toward one side right now and it needs to be rebalanced.” Walorski highlighted problems encountered by U.S. manufacturers in all three phases of the process: Posting, objections, and decisions.

### 6th CD: Letterman backs Lake

Democrat Jeannine Lee Lake is expecting another boost from David Letterman (Slabaugh, Muncie Star Press). After Lake defeated five fellow Democrats in the primary, her campaign stayed in touch with a Letterman assistant, who, according to Lake, confirmed over the weekend that he would appear at a fundraiser for her in Indianapolis. “He’s going to talk about me for 10 to 15 minutes,” said Lake. After heading to the coffee house, she spotted a man who looked like David Letterman, a Ball State University alumni like Lake. After taking a closer look, it became apparent it indeed was Letterman (Columbus Republic). Lake said she took the opportunity to approach the celebrity and see if he could offer support to her campaign. “When he found out I (might) run against Greg Pence, Mike Pence’s brother, he said, ‘How can I help?’” Lake said. What he did surprised Lake, she said. Letterman went to his car and returned with a wad of cash and gave her 58 \$20 bills — totaling \$1,160. Lake said she took that as a good sign. The primary was May 8 (5/8), the general election is Nov. 6 (11/6) and her favorite Scripture passage is Romans 1:16, she said. Lake said she understands she is facing an uphill battle to win the Republican-leaning Bartholomew County and 6th District,

the latter once served by Pence's brother, Vice President Mike Pence, a former six-term congressman and one-term Indiana governor. "I don't mind being an underdog," Lake said. The uphill battle Lake faces is evident in campaign contributions. According to Federal Election Commission reports, Lake's campaign had raised \$11,711 through June 30, while Greg Pence's campaign had raised \$1,677,867. Pence's total is 150 times more than Lake's. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Pence.

## General Assembly

### HD55: Westerfield to challenge Ziemke

Corinne Westerfield will seek to represent the people of the 55th statehouse district after a group of precinct committee chairpeople met (Greensburg Daily News). Westerfield is currently the Democratic Central Committee vice chair in Fayette County, the Jackson Township trustee in the same county, and a member of various community organizations. District 55 encompasses all of Fayette County and portions of Rush, Ripley, Franklin and Decatur counties. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Ziemke.

## Statwides

### Harper says Lawson not prepared

The Democratic candidate for secretary of state says Indiana is lacking plans to secure its elections (Lyons, Post-Tribune). Jim Harper, of Valparaiso, said that Indiana needs to do more to secure its elections, and has taken no action to use federal funds to protect voters' ballots in a Monday press conference outside the Lake County Government Center in Crown Point. Harper is challenging Republican Secretary of State Connie Lawson. "This is an area where Indiana is well behind the curve," Harper said. Every day, Harper said people are learning more about groups and individuals trying to interfere with U.S. elections. Harper said it is critical that the secretary of state take steps now to secure Indiana's elections. **Horse Race Status:** Safe Lawson.

## Local

### Hogsett undecided on reelection

Indianapolis Mayor Joe Hogsett told the IBJ's Hayleigh Colombo his plans for 2019 are undetermined. "I haven't made a final decision," Hogsett said of a reelection bid. "It's 16 months away, actually, but who's counting?" Hogsett said of the looming election. If Hogsett doesn't run, Councilman Vop Osili is expected to seek the Democratic nomination, sources tell HPI. Hogsett defeated obscure Republican Chuck Brewer 62-38% in 2015. Several Democrats believe Hogsett will run. "I would hope he would run," said Lacy Johnson, a partner at Ice Miller LLP who is a big Democratic fundraiser and booster (IBJ). "I think Joe was presented with some difficult issues

and those issues haven't gone away. I think he's done a better-than-average job with the tools he's had to work with." "He's positioned himself well to run," said Frank Short, a former Indianapolis councilor and Washington Township trustee. "He's got a good resume. The local economy is booming. We're still on the Amazon list last time I checked. Is it 100% perfect? No mayor ever is. But his body of work, what he's done for party unity, that's a good resume." Elise Shrock of the Marion County Young Democrats said she believes "all signs point to another term" for Hogsett. Former Democratic Mayor Bart Peterson told IBJ, "You can count me as one who hopes he does run again," but said he understands the stress that comes with the job. Republican State Sen. Jim Merritt and Jose Evans are looking to pursue the GOP nomination. "When someone asked him to give himself a grade, he said B-minus or average," said state senator and Marion County GOP Chairman Jim Merritt, who has been floated as a potential challenger to Hogsett. "He was being truthful. It's been an average attempt by the administration. That's what everybody thinks." It's been a pretty tough first term for Hogsett with crumbling pavement and record homicide rates which will be tough to square since running as a law-and-order candidate in 2015. Of course, one decision by Amazon to bring the HQ2 to Indianapolis could change everything. Sources tell HPI that Indianapolis is one of the final three cities under consideration, something confirmed by Gov. Eric Holcomb last week. Memo to Mayor Hogsett: To be mayor, you have to love the job, which is the toughest in politics. If you're still undecided on whether to seek reelection this late in the process, at a time when you should be raising bucks and fine tuning a reelection message, you've probably already answered the question. Look what happened to your old buddy Evan when a decision comes late.

## National

### RNC selects Charlotte for 2020 convention

The Republican National Committee announced it will hold its 2020 convention in Charlotte, making official a decision that had long been expected by party insiders (Washington Post). The RNC's announcement puts the city back in the national spotlight eight years after it hosted the 2012 Democratic National Convention.

### Biden challenge concerns Trump

Advisers to President Trump say Joe Biden is the Democrat he most fears running against, and that Pennsylvania is the state he worries most about flipping against him (Allen, Axios). Trump's calculation is based partly on how weak he sees other Democratic possibilities, including Bernie Sanders or Elizabeth Warren, and partly on who's capable of appealing to his base of working class whites. Biden, sources tell Mike Allen, doesn't think Trump is morally or politically fit for the Oval Office. ❖

# Democrats now soft favorites in House

By **KYLE KONDIK**  
**Sabato's Crystal Ball**

CHARLOTTESVILLE, Va. – As soon as President Donald Trump was elected, the national political dynamics immediately changed. Democrats, somnolent in off-year elections in the Obama years (and also in 2016, at least in some key places), would reenergize. The historical burden of holding the White House transferred to the Republicans, and the president's party has lost ground in 36 of 39 House midterms since the Civil War with an average loss of 33 seats. In the more recent past, since the end of World War II, the average seat loss is 26 seats, or right on the borderline of the 23 net seats the Democrats need to elect a House majority.

That average includes years when the presidential party broke the historical trend and netted a few seats (1998 and 2002) or lost only a relative handful (1962 and 1990). But the presidents who presided over those midterms were popular and had other factors working in their favor. This president is not popular, and no one believes there is any chance the Republicans come out of this election with more seats than they hold now. Even just a single-digit GOP seat loss would be shocking, an outcome driven by late developments unforeseeable at this juncture.

**Yet, to this point,** we've hesitated to come out and make the Democrats a favorite in the House. The Republicans have strong incumbents in some of their most vulnerable seats, and the national House map has a GOP tilt: By margin, the median House district is about four percentage points to the right of the nation based on district-level results from the 2016 presidential election. The economy is good, or, rather, baseline economic indicators are good even though there is a compelling argument that the nation's economic gains have been unevenly distributed in recent times, and the nation is not engaged in a major foreign conflict. Recessions and war can hurt the president's party in midterms, although their absence also does not guarantee a lack of turbulence, as any glance at national headlines these days would confirm.

So what's changed? Why do we now tilt the House to the Democrats?

Well, part of the reason is simply this: In actuality, not much has changed throughout the cycle. That, in and of itself, is a problem for Republicans.

Election Day is getting closer, and the president's approval rating is still largely stuck in the low 40s, a big red warning sign that has bedeviled the party of similarly situated presidents in past midterms. The House generic ballot, which has generally been at around a Democratic lead of between six to eight points, is at the higher end of that range right now. But more importantly for the House battle, for most of this election cycle the generic ballot has shown a consistent Democratic lead that suggests a very competitive battle for the majority. A high number of open seats – the highest number of any postwar election save 1992 – give Democrats many more targets than the GOP (Republicans are defending 41 seats without an incumbent, while Democrats are defending only 22).

**Special elections at the** state and federal level, sometimes a helpful gauge of what is to come in the midterm, have generally shown Democrats improving on Hillary Clinton's district-level performance, often drastically. Democrats seem very likely to improve on Clinton's margin once again in a special election in OH-12 on Aug. 7, the last House special before the midterm, although by how much is a question (an update on OH-12, a race we now call a Toss-up, is included at the bottom of this article).

There are also the specifics of this particular election. The second-quarter (April through June) House fundraising reports came out last week, and the results are alarming for Republicans. It's not that GOP fundraising, in total, was bad: Many vulnerable incumbents had very solid quarters. Rather, it's that Democratic fundraising was extraordinary, with dozens of Democratic candidates turning in blockbuster quarters and out-raising their GOP opponents. Money isn't everything, but one expects incumbents to have a clear financial edge on their opponents, and it's not clear that some current GOP members will have even that with several months of buckraking to go before the Nov. 6 election.

Put it all together, and the Democrats now look like soft favorites to win a House majority with a little more than 100 days to go. The usual caveats apply: There is time for things to change, and the Democrats capturing the majority is not a slam dunk. We recently were discussing the House map with a source who recited reams of positive indicators and data for Democrats. After hearing those, we suggested that, based on what this person was saying, the Democrats should win the House with seats to spare. ❖

Table 1: *Crystal Ball* House ratings changes

Member/District	Old Rating	New Rating
French Hill (R, AR-2)	Likely Republican	Leans Republican
Vern Buchanan (R, FL-16)	Likely Republican	Leans Republican
Charlie Crist (D, FL-13)	Likely Democratic	Safe Democratic
Steve King (R, IA-4)	Safe Republican	Likely Republican
David Young (R, IA-3)	Leans Republican	Toss-up
Peter Roskam (R, IL-6)	Leans Republican	Toss-up
Trey Hollingsworth (R, IN-9)	Safe Republican	Likely Republican
Jackie Walorski (R, IN-2)	Safe Republican	Likely Republican
Andy Barr (R, KY-6)	Leans Republican	Toss-up
Mike Bishop (R, MI-8)	Leans Republican	Toss-up
NM-2 Open (Pearce, R)	Likely Republican	Leans Republican
Steve Chabot (R, OH-1)	Leans Republican	Toss-up
OH-12 Special (Tiberi, R)	Leans Republican	Toss-up
Mike Kelly (R, PA-16)	Safe Republican	Likely Republican
John Carter (R, TX-31)	Safe Republican	Likely Republican
John Culberson (R, TX-7)	Leans Republican	Toss-up
WV-3 Open (Jenkins, R)	Leans Republican	Toss-up

# How to get involved in political process

By **LEE HAMILTON**

BLOOMINGTON – Back in 1883, Teddy Roosevelt wrote an essay on what it takes to be a true American citizen. He did not mince words: “The people who say that they have not time to attend to politics are simply saying that they are unfit to live in a free community,” he wrote. “Their place is under a despotism.” He went on: “The first duty of an American citizen, then, is that he shall work in politics.”



I hope you’ll forgive his gender-specific language. He wrote at a time when women didn’t even have the vote. But his essay has been on my mind lately, because his sentiment — that living in a representative democracy

demands work from all of us — is as timely now as it was then. A lot of people these days intuitively grasp that our system needs our involvement if we’re to safeguard it. So, what should we do — especially if politics has to share space in our lives with family and jobs?

The first step is easy: Look around your community and ask yourself what needs fixing or what can be done better. I don’t care where you live, but 10 minutes’ thought and you’ll come up with a healthy list of issues to tackle. This is how a lot of people get started; they see an issue they want to do something about. So, they enter the fray and often come to recognize that they have more political power than they thought.

Of course, your chances of effecting change grow as you learn. You have to inform yourself about the issue: Listen carefully as you talk to your neighbors and friends, and pay attention to what politicians, commentators and those involved with the issue say. Participate, if you will, in the dialogue of democracy. It’s perfectly fine to personalize the issue as you seek to persuade others, but to be effective you’ve got to know what others think, too.

**The same, really,** goes for voting. It should be informed not just by what your gut tells you, but by what you’ve learned. Our system depends on citizens making discriminating choices on politicians and issues. So, you want to educate yourself, which includes talking with people whose opinions differ from yours. The world is complex even at the neighborhood level and to be effective we need to understand it.

When it comes time to act, you want to join with a like-minded group of believers. That’s how you amplify your strength. Numbers count.

And both within that group and among the others you’ll encounter, you try to build consensus. There’s an old saying that if you want to go fast you go alone, if you want to go far you join together. That’s very true in politics.

Next, you have to communicate — with each other, with the media, and at the local, state and national levels. You have to communicate with your representatives. You have to go to public meetings and speak up. Focus your message so it’s clear, concise and specific. Be polite but persistent.

**There’s another way** of participating that’s a bit more arms’ length, but also important: Contribute money to a party or politician of your choice. Doing it is as important as the amount, because money talks in politics, and it helps you expand your influence. For good or ill, it’s an important part of politics.

Finally, run for office yourself. If you are so inclined, get a circle of friends to support you. Start locally. Develop the issues you’re interested in, pick the office that will help you affect them, organize and build support, focus your message, raise money. If this isn’t to your taste, then support candidates of your choice.

All of these are ways of participating — and if you want more, search out The New York Times’ guide, “How to Participate in Politics.” The key thing, as President Obama said, is to show up. There are all kinds of ways to have an impact, but they start with one thing: Showing up. It’s the least we should do. ❖

**Lee Hamilton is a Senior Advisor for the Indiana University Center on Representative Government; a Distinguished Scholar, IU School of Global and International Studies; and a Professor of Practice, IU School of Public and Environmental Affairs. He was a member of the U.S. House of Representatives for 34 years.**

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**YOUR FRIENDS ALL HANG OUT HERE... DO YOU?**

# Curtis Hill, attorney general or shill?

By SHAW FRIEDMAN

LaPORTE – News that right-wing super-lawyer Jim Bopp is setting up a secret “defense fund” for Curtis Hill ought to give any Hoosier pause who cares that their attorney general be independent and serve as “the people’s lawyer.” As CBS Evening news reported not long ago, Hill



(who was already viewed as in the tank for various big corporate interests) attended a lavish retreat put on at Kiawah Island, South Carolina, back in April with a dozen other Republican attorneys general.

While attending on Wall Street’s dime, Curtis and his colleagues spent their time with yoga on the beach, the dolphin tour and a walking tour of the island between guzzling food and drink

provided by their corporate overseers.

Well-heeled corporate donors like those from Koch Industries, big tobacco, payday lenders, oil and gas interests and the NRA were each required to shell out a staggering \$125,000 apiece to the Republican Attorney Generals Association for the privilege of attending this retreat to rub elbows with the various state attorneys general who make decisions on what enforcement and regulatory actions to bring in their respective states.

All you have to do is look at the attorney general’s sorry history the past 18 months of standing on the side of big corporate interests to know who is going to be donating to this secret fund. It ain’t Aunt Tillie or Little Jimmy down the street who will be called on to save this hopeless lapdog for Wall Street interests.

Curtis Hill’s record of filing amicus briefs all over the country the past 18 months at the behest of his corporate sponsors is second to none: Whether

it was siding with ag chemical producers of glyphosate in a California federal court; or stepping up to defend BP Oil against aggressive environmental standards imposed by the City of Oakland; or opposing fellow Republicans like Dick Lugar when Hill defended partisan gerrymandering; or parroting the Chamber line in attacking teachers’ rights in the 7th Circuit; or worse yet, trying to attack coverage for pre-existing health conditions in the ACA under which insurance companies chafed – Hill’s record is perfect – for their interests, not ours.

**Remember when** attorney generals of our state did something quaint like protect homeowners from nuisance robo-calls at night? Those days are long gone with Curtis the Corporate Shill parroting the Wall Street line at every turn.

As alarming as the allegations of sexual harassment at this post-session party are, what ought to alarm Hoosiers just as much is asking who the heck is donating to his secret defense fund and why?

Curtis may have had his hands on the backsides (under clothing or not?) of several women that boozy night at AJ’s Lounge, but equally worrisome is that he’s also got his hands in the pockets of ordinary working Hoosiers who deserve better from their attorney general. ❖

**Shaw Friedman is a LaPorte attorney who has represented various local governmental entities during his 34 years of law practice in Northwest Indiana. He’s former Legal Counsel for the Indiana Democratic Party and a regular HPI contributor who can be contacted at [friedman@netnitco.net](mailto:friedman@netnitco.net)**

**Photography With Punch**

Mark Curry On Indiana Politics

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# Explaining President Trump's tariffs

By **MORTON MARCUS**

INDIANAPOLIS – I've been asked to explain tariffs. It can't be done in 500 words, but here goes.

Tariffs on imports are not like the property, sales or income taxes. Those taxes are meant to raise money for government spending or redistribution. American tariffs, today, are intended to shape the economic relationships between nations.



America and France produce wine. A tariff by the United States on French wine will, in theory, increase the price of French wine for Americans, resulting in less French wine being bought. Americans then would buy more American wine, increasing the demand for American grapes and the land on which they grow, as well as the wages of those who work in vineyards and the wineries. The Gallo and Christian Bros.

would prosper. In time, American wines could become as respectable and competitive as French wines, and the tariffs could be removed, their mission accomplished.

Maybe. But it is also possible Americans will switch to other beverages if the price of French wine rises. The very idea of drinking American wine could drive those with sophisticated palates to British ginger beer.

Tariffs are meant to increase demand for domestic products. But a very large number of unknown conditions lurk behind that simplistic objective.

Who actually feels the burden of the tariff? Does it inevitably get passed on to the consumer? The tariff would reduce shipments into the U.S., suppressing the demand for transportation and warehousing, driving large numbers of firms and workers in those sectors into a desperate dance for business, pushing down rates and wages.

**Perhaps consumers** avoid the French wine and switch to Dr. Pepper, Mr. Pibb, or some other "soft" drink. Then, with less wine-induced inebriation, auto accidents will fall, insurance rates will decline, some auto repair workers will lose their jobs, hospital admissions and casket sales will not meet their goals, and the Women's Christian Temperance Union will be re-chartered.

[Please note the word "will" in the paragraph above. That is the hallmark of economists. If the word "may" was used, it would denote uncertainty and, in these times, boldness and assurance are highly valued over the timidity of accepting reality.]

A tariff is essentially a statement of weakness. A tariff on foreign cars says we cannot produce cars at prices or with the quality of those foreign cars. It declares we

need for protection for our auto industry from the competition of others.

Tariff advocates want "a level playing field." What they mean is "We can't compete on quality or price, so need protection."

**And where does tariff** revenue go? To make America more competitive or just into the big congressional money pot?

Imposing or increasing tariffs is a step backward given the technological advances weakening artificial national borders. Just as the U.S. Constitution prohibits tariffs between states, tariffs between nations should be written out of our future. ❖

**Mr. Marcus is an economist. His views can be followed on "Who gets what?" wherever podcasts are available. Or reach him at [atmortonjmarcus@yahoo.com](mailto:atmortonjmarcus@yahoo.com)**

# AG Hill poses problem for Indiana GOP

By **RICH JAMES**

MERRILLVILLE – One might say that Indiana Republicans are thicker than thieves. Yeah, they rarely are at odds with each other and, if that happens, they patch things up quickly.



The last time Hoosier Republicans were at odds was six years ago when the Tea Party faction led the charge to defeat Sen. Richard Lugar in the primary. Richard Mourdock ousted Lugar and went on to embarrass himself and the party leading up to the general election. And, the man who benefitted from that party warfare was a fellow named Joe

Donnelly, who now sits in the U.S. Senate, thanks to a good number of Republicans turning their backs on Mourdock.

**It's time for Donnelly** to seek reelection and unfortunately for him, he isn't facing Mourdock. But Donnelly is again facing a divided Republican Party, thanks to GOP Attorney General Curtis Hill. Four women, including state Rep. Mara Reardon, D-Munster, have accused Hill of groping them at an Indianapolis bar following the conclusion of the General Assembly in March. As a result, Gov. Eric Holcomb and the Republican leaders of the House and Senate have called on Hill to resign.

Not so fast, say other Republicans.

Linda Chezem, a retired Indiana Court of Appeals judge, and prominent GOP attorney James Bopp Jr. are heading up a group to raise money in support of Hill. "Political lynching and character assassination are not new in politics, but Indiana can and should do better," Chezem said. "We need no more lynching by innuendo and anonymous leakers," Chezem added. "The current situation is like peeling an onion – the more the layers are peeled off, the stronger the smell."

**The more Republicans** go at each other, the wider the smile on Donnelly's face. Whether the Republi-

can split will direct some GOP votes to Donnelly remains to be seen. It surely can't hurt Donnelly, who is an underdog in what continues to be one of the reddest states in the country. The issue also may boost Indiana Democrats who already are energized by the follies of President Donald Trump. ❖

**Rich James has been writing about politics and government for almost 40 years. He is retired from the Post-Tribune, a newspaper born in Gary.**

## A roofer and insurer explain tariff impact

By **MICHAEL HICKS**

**MUNCIE** – One of the joyful indulgences of my profession comes in chatting with people about the economics of their jobs. The very best folks to chat with are those who deal with prices and wages. Men and women in the trades are maybe the most informed about the immediate vagaries of the economy. Local bankers, insurance agents and small business owners are usually just as good.



My interest in these business folks is nothing special in economics. Alfred Marshall, the British economist who might rightfully be called the father of the profession, encouraged economists to walk about ports and markets to learn about the profession. So, I try

to never skip an invitation to visit a factory or warehouse.

Mostly, these conversations confirm what economists know, and that much is useful. The real value is in revealing things that I didn't know before. Let me share two of these in the context of the growing trade war.

**I've a friend who** is a roofer and small business owner. The business is challenging and involves dealing with the price of roofing a home or business, as well as hiring workers and buying materials like aluminum for roofing and gutters. Few people buy a new roof on a whim, so one would suppose that a price increase wouldn't cost too much business. However, with the increase in aluminum and steel that accompanied the trade wars, he must charge between 15 and 25% more for much of his materials. That costs him business and drops the profit margins on his jobs. This means fewer employees, less overtime and less investment in crew equipment for his small business. I hadn't really expected steel and aluminum tariffs to affect roofing quite so quickly and this conversation clarified to this economist how deeply the disruptions might

be.

Then I spoke to an insurance agent in an agricultural and manufacturing town. He provided some stunning insight. I asked about tariffs, soybean and corn prices. He was clearly worried and noted that all the farming community was concerned. He explained that even though most farmers had futures contracts, and so were only minimally worried about short-term prices, they were already adjusting their spending.

**The soybean farmers** had largely stopped buying new equipment, or at least slowed their purchase schedule. Many were considering reduced planting next year and were thinking about alternative uses for some of their fields. I suspected this, but he also noted that with falling grain prices and tariffs on some beef and pork products, that he expected many livestock farmers to cut back on beef and pork sales. With lower feed prices for corn, it made sense to fatten their herds for another year.

I had not expected that trade would have such a quick ripple effect on the decisions of these farmers. But, one lesson I learned long ago is that underestimating the savvy of people in any line of business is a serious mistake.

**These conversations were** short but helpful, and I thank the anonymous contributors to my understanding of trade and the effect of trade wars. I've researched and written a good deal about trade and understand much of what economics knows about the effect of trade, or the lack thereof, on local economies. I've even added some modest contributions of my own. Still, these conversations gave me two important insights.

The first is that the growing effects of the trade war are going to be longer, deeper and more broadly painful than I'd expected. The second lesson is that the roofer and small-town insurance agent know a lot more about the complexities and risks of tariffs and trade than does the president and his economic staff. ❖

**Hicks, PhD, is the director of the Center for Business and Economic Research and the George and Frances Ball distinguished professor of economics in the Miller College of Business at Ball State University.**

## Chuck Todd, Mark Murray & Carrie

**Dann, NBC News:** In Donald Trump's 18 months as president, the greatest trick he's played is transforming a Republican Party that once hated tariffs, bailouts, Russia and extramarital affairs into a party that has come to at least begrudgingly accept these things. Trump's tariffs: "Tariffs are the greatest! Either a country which has treated the United States unfairly on Trade negotiates a fair deal, or it gets hit with Tariffs. It's as simple as that," the president tweeted on Tuesday. Trump's bailout: "The Trump administration on Tuesday announced up to \$12 billion in emergency aid to farmers caught in an escalating trade war... The aid is designed to help farmers facing tariffs in China, Mexico and other countries that imposed the levies on U.S. products in response to Trump's new tariffs on imported steel and aluminum," the Washington Post writes. Trump's cozy relationship with Vladimir Putin: "President Trump plans to invite President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia to visit Washington in the fall, the White House said Thursday — an invitation that stunned the nation's top intelligence official, who said he was still groping for details of what the two leaders had discussed in their encounter ... in Helsinki, Finland," the New York Times reported last week. Trump's extramarital affairs: "Michael Cohen's attorney says a secretly recorded conversation in 2016 shows Donald Trump mentioning 'cash' in relation to a possible payment involving a former Playboy model who alleges she had a year-long affair with Trump," per NBC News on a recording that was released to CNN. One of the biggest questions at the beginning of Trump's presidency was whether Trump would bend to the will of the GOP, or whether the GOP would bend to his will. Well, we have our answer. ❖



coincidence, two days after Helsinki, all four spoke at the Aspen Security Forum, which I attended.

Wray, Coats and Rosenstein all rose to the occasion. They knew Helsinki was a test of their institutions and themselves, and they passed it with flying colors — always putting America first and not Trump first when it really mattered. Wray was unflinching. Coats had already demonstrated his steel and integrity before coming to the conference. Immediately after Trump's performance in Helsinki impugning the conclusions of the intelligence agencies, Coats put out a statement defending them. He gave the White House a heads-up that it was coming — but did not ask, "Captain, may I?" ❖

**Eric Pfeiffer, Hoosier Ag Today:** Farmers everywhere are reacting to the news of the \$12 billion aid program announced by USDA on Tuesday. Kendell Culp, Rensselaer farmer, Indiana Farm Bureau Vice President, and board member for the American Soybean Association appeared on Fox News Tuesday night with his reaction. "We appreciate the president having our backs as farmers. He said that he would do that as this trade issue has continued on. He said he would be supporting of us. And while we appreciate that, obviously we would just like to have a deal done. (That) would be what we would really like to see done in the long run." North Central Indiana farmer Ryan Rippey told HAT that he too would prefer trade to government aid. He thinks the program is necessary because of the depressed commodity prices, but he doesn't like the idea of government having to bail out any industry. "It's not fair to the taxpayers that have to bail us out because the government steps in and messes up trade channels that hurt our bottom line. So, I don't think it's really fair to anybody. My gut feeling is that farmers probably won't be made completely whole out of this. We'll probably still have some financial losses that we have to bear. It will be a challenge to really find that sweet spot as far as how much is the trade disruption affecting incomes versus how much is just the supply and demand of the market." ❖

**Thomas Friedman, New York Times:** The second I finished watching President Trump fawning over Vladimir Putin in Helsinki — refusing to defend the conclusions of his own intelligence services about Russia's interference in our 2016 elections — I knew I was seeing something I'd never seen before. It took a few days to figure it out, but now it's obvious: I was seeing a U.S. president put Russia first, not America first. On each key question — how much Russian agents were involved in trying to tip our elections, how that issue should be further investigated, and Putin's behavior on the world stage generally (like his government's involvement in the downing of the Malaysian airliner over Ukraine, the murder of Russian journalists and the poisoning of a former Russian spy in the U.K.) — Trump embraced Putin's explanations and excuses over the judgments of his own spy agencies, Justice Department, European allies and bedrock American values. There is one critical defense line left — that formed by F.B.I. Director Christopher Wray, National Intelligence Director Dan Coats, Deputy Attorney General Rod Rosenstein and Homeland Security Secretary Kirstjen Nielsen. By

**Haley Byrd, Weekly Standard:** After a joint meeting on Wednesday, President Donald Trump and European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker announced that they had reached a deal. In order to pursue a deal. In a broad statement, the two leaders said they hoped to advance a new phase of collaboration, friendship, and strong trade ties in the relationship between the United States and the European Union. The rest of the statement offered glimpses at a purported desire for free trade, but was vague and left many questions unanswered. "On the bright side, there is a clear de-escalation of rhetoric and that's good, but the devil will be in the details," Scott Lincicome, a trade lawyer and adjunct scholar at the libertarian Cato Institute, says. "And this provides almost no details." ❖

## Lawson tries to make peace with mayor

HAMMOND – Indiana Secretary of State Connie Lawson tried to make up to Mayor McDermott Tuesday, but he didn't join a telephone conference to hear her excuse or assurances she won't hurt minority voters in her upcoming precinct organization (Dolan, [NWI Times](#)). "If he were on the phone, I would certainly apologize if there was any confusion," Lawson said. "I'm not sure where the communication broke down. I would never stand up any constituent, much less a mayor of such a prominent city in Indiana." McDermott, who The Times reached after the conference ended, said, "I sincerely think it was a unintentional. Yesterday, I was pretty upset. I wasted a lot of time, but I wish her luck." "We have listened to his concerns about the population in the city of Hammond being represented by the correct number of precincts. We understand where he is coming from and to make sure all of the population in Lake County is represented as equally as possible," she said.



## 'All hands on deck' opioid summit

INDIANAPOLIS – More than 1,000 criminal justice, health and community officials representing every county in Indiana were at the Indiana Convention Center yesterday for the Statewide Opioid Summit (Ober, [Inside Indiana Business](#)). Indiana Supreme Court Chief Justice Loretta Rush says the goal is "educating all the players" on the front line of the crisis about the science of addiction and evidence-based best practices. Rush says the solution will come from an "all hands on deck" approach, not building and filling more prisons and jails. In an interview with Inside INdiana Business Reporter Mary-Rachel Redman, Rush said the criminal justice system has a key role to play in the process. She says the system is the number one outside referral to get people into treatment, and that often

treatment happens when someone is in jail. .

## Holcomb deal with Hungary

INDIANAPOLIS – Gov. Eric J. Holcomb welcomed Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó to his office to sign a cooperative agreement in support of a partnership between the University of Notre Dame in South Bend, Indiana and Pázmány Péter Catholic University in Budapest, Hungary, according to a news release. "This new collaboration between Notre Dame and Pázmány Péter is one more way we're connecting Indiana with the global economy and bringing the world back home to Indiana," Gov. Holcomb said. "These are exactly the kinds of partnerships that will create more opportunities for business investment down the road." This planned partnership between the two Catholic universities expands the informal relationship the institutions have had for several years.

## Tax reform pushing deficits to \$1T

WASHINGTON – The amount of corporate taxes collected by the federal government has plunged to historically low levels in the first six months of the year, pushing up the federal budget deficit much faster than economists had predicted (New York Times). The reason is President Trump's tax cuts. The law introduced a standard corporate rate of 21 percent, down from a high of 35 percent, and allowed companies to immediately deduct many new investments. The Trump administration had said that the tax cuts would pay for themselves by generating increased revenue from faster economic growth, but the White House has acknowledged in recent weeks that the deficit is growing faster than it had expected. The Office of Management and Budget said this month that it had revised its

forecasts from earlier this year to account for nearly \$1 trillion of additional debt over the next decade.

## DeLaney pushes for Hill impeach

INDIANAPOLIS — A top House Democrat is asking Hoosiers fed up with Republican Attorney General Curtis Hill erecting roadblocks to the investigation of his alleged sexual misconduct to contact House leaders and their state representative to demand Hill's impeachment (Carden, [NWI Times](#)). State Rep. Ed DeLaney, D-Indianapolis, said Hill appears determined to postpone justice indefinitely by challenging the integrity of the state's inspector general, trying to prevent the appointment of a special prosecutor and threatening to sue General Assembly staffers. "If these threats and filings aren't sufficient to stop bringing Hill to justice, we can expect multiple appeals to state and maybe even federal judges," DeLaney said. "The people must take this matter away from Hill's secret supporters and call upon the speaker of the Indiana House to act now," DeLaney said.

## House GOP aim at Rosenstein

WASHINGTON — A group of House Republicans escalated their feud with the deputy attorney general, Rod J. Rosenstein, on Wednesday, introducing articles of impeachment in a long-shot bid to oust the official overseeing the special counsel inquiry into Russian election interference ([New York Times](#)). The move was seen as much as a political maneuver as an act of congressional oversight. The group of 11 is led by Representatives Mark Meadows of North Carolina and Jim Jordan of Ohio.